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ABSTRACT

This manual was intended to help community leaders plan and conduct consumer education workshops. The content is in twelve sections as follows: (1) covers the need for consumer education and several consumer education definitions; (2) presents some possible workshop topics; (3) describes methods that can be used to ascertain the consumers' needs, including modified Delphi method, modified brainstorming procedure, consumer sounding boards, and consumer surveys; (4) focuses on the characteristics of four target groups in the community: low income, elderly, blacks, and handicapped; (5) suggests potential speakers; (6) presents some ideas for recruiting and working with volunteers; (7) covers nine steps of organizing a workshop, including the selection of a steering committee, determining issues and audiences, determining workshop goals and objectives, and determining workshop format; (8) discusses publicity and advanced marketing; (9) presents four steps toward the implementation of the workshop; (10) covers the conference itself; (11) suggests seven steps for evaluating the workshop; and (12) covers post-conference activities. A consumer awareness survey form, a discussion of probability sample, and the responsibilities of community workshop initiators are appended. (EM)

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COMMUNITY CONSUMER EDUCATION AWARENESS WORKSHOPS

How To Plan and Conduct Them

A Basic Guide for the Title I HEA CCEA Workshop

By
Robin B. Parks and Glen H. Mitchell
With
Robert T. Arnold

Community Consumer Education Awareness Project
Sponsored by Virginia Polytechnic Institute
and State University Extension Division
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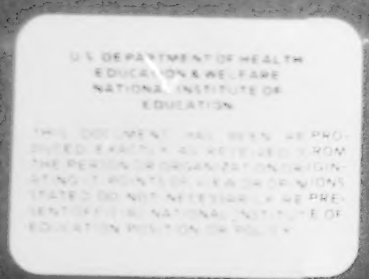

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Preface

As we come to the last quarter of the twentieth century, it becomes apparent that we need more better ways of involving people and helping them cope with their problems, choices, and opportunities in an advanced industrial society. The need for responsive and responsible individuals in a democracy has repeatedly been acknowledged. Yet in many cases, it is difficult to inform and to involve consumers in a highly advanced technological and densely populated society so they (individuals) are truly effective.

The purpose of this manual is to instruct community leaders in planning and conducting a local workshop to educate consumers in their communities. The manual is intended as an action guide to prepare for such a community project.

Since the characteristics of each project will vary depending on the resources available and the situations encountered, the authors have not discussed every contingency of a Community Consumer Education Workshop.

An editorial comment should be made about the use of the term "he" throughout the context when referring to a person, regardless of gender. This is by no means meant to be discriminatory. This particular style was chosen simply to avoid cumbersome readings.

Community Consumer Education Awareness Workshops are meant to help individuals in improving their quality of life. It is hoped that this publication will help volunteers in this valuable pursuit of Community Consumer Education Awareness Workshops.

Acknowledgements

To list everyone who has helped to accomplish the publication of this manual would be an impossible task. However, the authors would like to specifically acknowledge the financing and assistance of Title I of the Higher Education Act. We have also greatly benefitted from the cooperation, encouragement, and help of many of our colleagues at Virginia Tech, particularly the contributions of Martha McDonald, Nancy Barclay, Del Dyer, Ruth Harris, Michael Appleby, and Marilyn Grantham.

THE NEED FOR CONSUMER EDUCATION. WHAT IS IT?

Over the past decade, people have become increasingly concerned over the rising costs of food, housing, medical care, transportation, education, utilities, and other goods and services. Inflation and its effect on the dollar is a common topic in the news, in general conversation, and in governmental decision-making. Didn't the winter of 1976 raise everyone's consciousness about the high cost of heating? And housing costs seem to be skyrocketing.

Likewise, concern over the rights of consumers is making its way to the front. Consider President Kennedy's "bill of consumer rights" in 1962: the right to be heard, the right to safety, the right to be informed, and the right to choose.

Remember Nader's Raiders clamoring to be heard? Aren't seat belts now installed in all cars for the occupants' safety? Doesn't nutrition labeling help inform consumers of the contents of that can on the grocery shelf? And what about the anti-trust laws that are on the books?

However, along with these consumer rights also come consumer responsibilities. Garman *et al.* tells us that the right to be heard carries the responsibility of saying that a certain product or service is not reliable. The right to safety means that the consumer has the responsibility of not tolerating unsafe items. The right to be informed carries the responsibility of using and evaluating the information that is made available. And the right to choose means that the consumer must take an active part in the legislative process to discourage laws restricting competition and, thereby, consumer choice.

Now that we know some of the consumer's rights and responsibilities, how can we disperse this information to the consumer to ensure that he/she exercises them? Enter consumer education.

What Is Consumer Education?

In his Consumer Education Resource Materials Kit, Dr. Stewart M. Lee shares with us several definitions of consumer education:

Consumer Education is the development of the individual in the skills, concepts, and understandings required for everyday living to achieve, within the framework of his own values, maximum utilization of and satisfaction from his resources. "Guidelines for Consumer Education," Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Illinois, 1972.

Consumer Education is inherently tied to developing a personal philosophy, finding satisfaction in daily living, and fulfilling a citizenship role in a free enterprise system. The purposes of Consumer Education are to help each student evolve his own value system, develop a sound decision-making procedure based upon his values, evaluate alternatives in the marketplace and get the best buys for his money, understand his rights and responsibilities as a consumer in our society, and fulfill his role in directing a free enterprise system. "Suggested Guidelines for Consumer Education: Grades K-12," President's Committee on Consumer Interests, Washington, D.C., 1970.

Consumer Education is a continuing process of learning, concerned with the quality of life as influenced by choices in the marketplace. "Brochure," Michigan Consumer Education Services Center, Eastern Michigan University.

Consumer Education is consumer information, consumer awareness, and appropriate decision-making for the individual. Dr. William Johnston, New Jersey Center for Consumer Education Services, Edison, N. J.

Consumer Education is a vehicle by which each individual can gain understanding of changes in the economy; clarify personal goals, values and attitudes; identify alternatives; and make decisions that will result

in maximum satisfaction and benefits. "A Guide for Evaluating Consumer Education Programs and Materials," American Home Economics Association, 1972.

Consumer Education is defined as the educational and informational investments in the human agent's capabilities for performing those roles associated with directing economic activity, satisfying public and private wants, and improving economic performance in the marketplace. It is a functional definition that emphasizes investments in education directed to the various social roles that the student will perform, including adult vocational roles, economic roles, political roles and others... These roles are interdependent... Education for other roles can contribute to the education of the consumer... Consumer education is both a teaching technique and a body of subject matter. It can be a teaching technique when consumer problems are used to illustrate disciplinary concepts and principles... Consumer education can be the primary focus of the educational process. "Journal of Home Economics," October 1971.

Conducting a community workshop is one way to help educate the citizens of the Commonwealth to fulfill ther rights and responsibilities as consumers in the American economy.

WHAT ARE SOME POSSIBLE CONSUMER EDUCATION TOPICS?

A. What do people do with their time and money?

In a lifetime, people will spend both time and money on a wide variety of products and services. Most folks must pay for and furnish housing, whether they rent or buy. Everyone must eat, and a significant amount of time and money are spent to make this possible. Clothing is another necessity on which consumers spent time and money, not to mention vacations, automobiles, telephones, schools and laundry. According to The Survey of Current Business (May 1977) here is how

the American population spent its income in the first quarter of 1977:

Durable goods	15%
Motor vehicles and parts	7
Furniture and household equipment	6
Other	2
Non-durable goods	40%
Food	20
Clothing and shoes	7
Gasoline and oil	4
Fuel oil and coal	1
Other	8
Services	45%
Housing	15
Household operation	7
Electricity and gas	3
Other	4
Transportation	3
Other	19

B. What do people perceive are their problems/concerns?

In general, a temporary group situation (such as a workshop) does not elicit all of the concerns of the group's members. That is, when the group has a relatively short period of duration, the participants will usually not verbalize all of their problems. Therefore, problems that group members are willing to discuss and those that are common to the majority are the concerns that can more readily be dealt with in the workshop. Additional deep-seated concerns are best handled under more intense conditions (more individualized and of longer duration), such as counseling sessions.

A recent Louis Harris poll tells us some problems which people do verbalize:

-- 77 percent worry most about the high price of products.

-- 69 percent list the high cost of hospital and medical care as their chief concern.

-- 48 percent worry most about the poor quality of products.

-- 44 percent are most concerned about misleading advertising.

-- 38 percent worry most about the poor quality of service and repairs.

C. "Crises"/major decisions of various stages of life.

At different stages in the life cycle, people probably face various sorts of crises or major decisions. For example, a child in school must decide how much he or she wants to study and, later, what course of study to choose in order to prepare for a selected vocation or career. A high school graduate decides whether or not to continue his education. A young adult may be faced with supporting him or herself, choosing to marry a certain person, or deciding to have children or not. Parents with children at home may need to decide about giving their children an allowance, whether or not to save money for college, how much (if any) insurance to buy, or about renting or buying a larger place to live. During middle age, a person may be faced with the decision of returning to the ranks of the employed after having raised a family, what to do with an elderly parent who is infirm, or how to plan his estate. An aged person may need to decide how much of a limited income to budget for groceries, how to best cope with an illness, or how to know the most reliable source from which to purchase a hearing aid.

And these are only a small sample of the kinds of situations that people face every day.

Reviewing the ways in which people spend their time and money, which problems can be comfortably handled in a group situation,

and some major decisions or crises that arise in a lifetime can provide a consumer education workshop planning group with some ideas of topics for the workshop sessions.

Below is a list of topics proposed for one C.C.E.A. workshop:

High Cost of Departing (Funerals)	Credit Ratings and Where They Originate
Estate Planning and Wills	Local Consumer Protection Boards
Shopping for Foods	How to Evaluate Nursing Homes
Cutting Energy Bills	Tenant-landlord Relationships
Better Business Bureau	Shopping for Credit
House Repairs	Buying a Used Car
Food Buying Cooperatives	Home Gardening
Women's Rights	Retirement Planning
Buying the Right Drugs at the Right Price	How to Complain (includes the role of the Virginia Office of Consumer Affairs)
Purchasing and Preparation of Sea Foods	Choosing a Dentist

ASCERTAINING COMMUNITY CONSUMER EDUCATION TOPICS

As we come to this area of selecting topics, it becomes more evident that we must think in terms of the user and of his needs. How to establish the consumer or the user needs presupposes that we do know our potential community (target market). Having established the audience or community of potential users, we then proceed to ascertain the possible topics. This can be done in terms of money expended, time expended, felt needs, life cycle, or some variation of these. For simplicity's sake, let us utilize felt needs or problems. We might ascertain these by a) modified Delphi method or utilizing "influentials," 2) modified brainstorming procedure, 3) surveying

methodology, 4) consumer panel or 5) some combination of these. In reality, we generally utilize parts of all of these.

The modified Delphi method (remember the Greek oracles) would be to interview (personally, by telephone, or by mail) those individuals you feel are most knowledgeable about this group for the key problems that they feel this group faces. First, carefully establish what you want to do and the reasons for asking their participation. You may care to have them give problems both a definition and a tentative ranking of importance. With most Delphi methods, you reoccurringly poll the experts as more knowledge generates to have their further reactions. Generally, the information must be assembled, clarified and consolidated by one analyst between rounds. Generally, the requestioning of the experts becomes more pointed and structured over time. Often this group may include persons who will care to participate in CCEA at a later date.

The modified brainstorming procedure is fashioned after the procedure promulgated by advertising executive Alex F. Osborne of BBDO, and now has its own Creative Education Institute at the University of Buffalo (now SUNY-Buffalo).

Brainstorming consists of allowing persons without inhibitions to look at older problems or topics with the hope of generating as many ideas as possible about a given subject. You might be asked to think of all possible uses of pliofilm, or how could we improve downtown parking. Osborn's rules for brainstorming are:

1. Criticism is ruled out. Adverse judgment of ideas must be withheld until later.
2. Freewheeling is welcomed. The wilder the idea, the better. It is easier to tame down than to think up.
3. Quantity of ideas are wanted. The greater the number of ideas, the more the likelihood of useful ideas.

4. Combination and improvements are sought. Participants should suggest how ideas of others can be turned into better ideas; or how two or more ideas can be joined in still another idea.[1]

Generally, a group is assembled in a relaxed environment with (1) one or more secretaries appointed, (2) the rules explained and (3) the subject described. It is highly important that the rules be followed, particularly, rule 1. You desire creativity and any criticism, implied or verbalized, is counterproductive. Most persons have difficulty getting away from critical thinking at first but gradually become prolific and at ease with the concept of brainstorming. Brainstorming groups can be any size but generally it is considered better to have groups from the size of 5 to 15. Time can vary but often it is used from 15 to 40 minutes on the first encounter with the topic being changed if you wish to continue the same group. Some groups use "stop and go" with three minutes of talking and then five minutes of time for "incubation of ideas."

Generally, subsequently, the group secretaries prepare a typed list of all ideas suggested before and afterward with room for additions. Then, the chairman edits and classifies the ideas within logical categories. Then, another session is held to further brainstorm and then to select those ideas most promising.

Consumer Sounding Boards

One method of finding out consumers' needs and/or desires has been to assemble small groups of rather typical or representative consumers to find out how they view products and services. Used both by industry and by government, the questioning could be over a product, a service, or a need. For example, the maker of rose spray might assemble a group of rose growers.

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[1]Adopted from Osborn, A. F., Applied Imagination, 3rd Revised Edition (New York: Charles Scribner and Sons), 1963, p. 156.

Utilizing an indirect approach, they might ask about the following: how many rose plants do you have, where and when did you purchase the plants, do you buy fertilizer and insecticides from the same place, when do you spray, how do you spray, how often, what methods do you use to keep down insects, what are the problems you have, what would you like in the way of products not now available, etc. The same procedure has been used for goods such as women's dresses, services such as collection of garbage, police protection, etc., and other intangibles such as a life insurance policy. Nominally, a history is made of the product or service being used, the purposes intended, the experiences, advantages and disadvantages, and the desires for improvement. Most case studies when this has not been done previously indicate much diversity between producers and ultimate users. Recently, the National Bureau of Standards[1] has involved consumer sounding boards to help establish standards. Often, questionnaires and taped recordings are used to facilitate the handling of information developed in a group situation. Those individuals leading the group often use indirect approaches but should have an established agenda to accomplish.

In your case, you might ask the consumer sounding boards to (1) delineate eight (or however many workshops you desire) major consumer problem areas and rank them, (2) taking them individually, what are the important parts involved, i.e. buying a home might include - condominium vs. townhouses vs. individual homes, costs - initial and upkeep, taxes, heating, and others, financing alternatives, uses of realtors, appraisers and others, title insurance or not; insurance - how much and what kind, property taxes, effect on your income tax, and other phases, and (3) what resources are available in the community to

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[1]McGehan, F. P., "Utilizing Consumer Insights", Dimensions, National Bureau of Standards, Washington, D.C., pp. 10-12.

help the consumer. Note that (1) there should be some diversity of answers as the panel is not supposed to be homeogenous and (2) the consumer sounding board is to relate experiences, attitudes and values but does not decide a final workshop. Their (consumer sounding board) is to supply the needed input of consumers; later you and others must reconcile the need with what the workshop can provide.

Guidelines for a Series of Questions[1]

To be used in developing group discussion of a consumer product brought to a Consumer Sounding Board by any organization, or group concerned with the development of a voluntary consumer product standard for performance and/or specifications. (Begin with brief review of purposes of standards.)

1. What is the product (problem), and what is a workable definition?
2. What is your opinion as to what the product or service is meant to do?
3. What is your experience with its use?
4. What is your experience with its misuse or possible misuse?
5. What are the factors which affect your choice of a brand of this product? Appearance? Comfort? Efficiency? Durability? Safety? etc.
6. What would you like to see as an added benefit in this product?
7. What would be the "trade-off"--increased cost from improved performance, better looks, safer use, easier use, less servicing, etc.?
8. Would you accept a higher price to obtain these, any one or several, added benefits? Do you believe other consumers would? If not, why?
9. Are you satisfied with present labeling and/or instructions supplied with this product?

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[1]Adapted from Guidelines for Standards Briefing Seminars/Consumer Sounding Boards Programs, American National Standards Institute, Inc., New York, p. 10.

(Note: Although this is set up for products, a very similar system could be used for services, particularly items 1 thru 12.)

10. Have you suggestions for improved wording or improved position and material of label? Do you wish, as a group, to make a recommendation on labels as to size of type, position, and visibility to accompany the product after development of the new standard?

11. Which type of standard do you feel gives consumer buyers the most practical help in selecting the product best suited to their needs -- an overall standard for the entire product or standards used as measuring sticks to show the level of performance of factors making up that product, such as, in a textile, colorfastness, washability or drycleanability, shrinkage resistance, stretch recovery, etc.?

12. Invite group comments, including recommendations to the committee. Since it is very difficult to determine from tape recordings of meetings what recommendations have the support of the sounding board membership, it is suggested that after discussing each consumer item the leader for the meeting summarize for the group what he or she feels are the agreements of the group.

Consumer Surveys

One goal of most groups is to find out (1) what are their people's problems, (2) what are they thinking and (3) what are they doing. One attempt to discover this often used by social scientists is the survey method. Surveys often may reveal both events and individuals that are often overlooked in the other methods. Yet, they do have many shortcomings and limitations. First and foremost, surveys are costly and generally are limited in scope if they are to be effective. Collecting the data, tabulating, and analyzing surveys is labor-intensive and costly. A good national survey of 1600 respondents will often cost $75,000 or more. A surveyor may often spend 3 to 5 hours locating the respondent for every hour spent interviewing. Another problem is that many surveys are so broad that they may develop more questions and fewer answers than you desire. Be certain that you have checked secondary sources to see if the information is not already available.

Despite these handicaps, consumer surveys are quite popular as they can give you a means of seeing the "instant picture" and of assigning priorities.

Some groups have used surveying after a session with their Delphi group and their consumer sounding boards. For efficiency's sake, you must decide how you plan to use the material. Interviewing can help get the public thinking and talking about your conference and your objectives. Also, costs can be diminished by use of volunteers and by other methods.

The Questionnaire Itself: Decide first of all what information you desire. Construct tables or boxes where you accumulate the information gained and see how the data is to be used (i.e. if you only need to know whether somebody is 65 or over, but not whether they are 73, you can diminish the types of questions and answers to be set forth.) Make sure you know what you want. If location is a factor, ask for it. Otherwise, you may care to eliminate it.

Nominally, questionnaires have these characteristics:

1) contain classification data, i.e. age, location, income, sex, etc.

2) generally have a walk-in statement that explains the purpose and the sponsorship

3) opening questions are generally the simplest and must attract the respondent's interest

4) will vary depending on whether they are to be used in personal, mail or telephone interviews

5) questions must be answerable and logical to the respondent. Avoid ambiguity. Don't make the respondent look bad.

6) arrange the questions so that they do not unduly influence the following questions

7) locate questions which are difficult in the body or near end of the questionnaire

8) if necessary, use several questions instead of one

9) be certain to have a good closing which represents that you appreciate the respondent's endeavors and reinforces the opening walk-in statement

10) questionnaires should be simple, easy to answer, easy to record the answer, and logically direct

11) regardless of its apparent clarity, pre-test any questionnaire

We are enclosing a questionnaire in the appendix that we have employed as a sample.

Sample or Not: Stratified samples are often more reliable than complete surveys of the population. Yet in this work, we hesitate to advocate a strict sampling procedure. Most basic sampling or marketing research books will tell you how to design and pull a scientific survey. We hesitate to do this, as we think this survey should be used more as an indicator and not as a strictly scientific statistical device.

The households interviewed should represent or indicate something. Hence, whatever you study you should keep a good record of who you sampled. Be particularly cognizant of different age groups and other classifications.

Many researchers to simplify their sampling problems will interview within a block or geographic area. You may care to follow this practice. Many larger cities will already have census block data figures which can aid you in regard to numbers, family sizes and ages (some census data is old i.e. 1969, but it does give you a starting point.)

Our suggestion is that you decide on your manpower situation and then decide on your method of picking interviewees. If you have a large group of senior citizens and/or a business education class, you may care to pick a rather large sample. Also, the method used will dicate the numbers. For example, if you utilize free telephone operators, this may set a number whereas if you mail out questionnaires, the cost of mailing and returning the questionnaire may decide a number. Personal interviewing is considered

the most reliable but it also has costs and time involved. Many groups are trying combinations of the three methods - telephone and mail, personal interview and mail, and an individual dropping off the questionnaire and picking it up. All of these methods have their advantages and disadvantages as discussed below.

Methods: Personal interviewing has the advantage of high acceptance, one can readily observe intensity and quality of answers, can often hold the interviewee's attention for a longer period of time but tends to be the costliest and the interviewer can more easily bias the respondent.

Telephone interviewing has the advantage of being cheaper, able to reach people easier from a distance, can keep calling back and hence less cost, and enables one to terminate an interview easier. Disadvantages would include (1) interviewer can more easily bias the respondent and (2) this is costlier than mail questionnaire.

Mail questionnaires are often considered the cheapest of the three methods when interviewers are paid, eliminate the bias of an interviewer, can readily reach both rural and distant points and can be answered at the convenience of the recipient. Conversely, it has the disadvantages of often the smallest rate of acceptance, does not allow for any reentry if the individual does not understand the question or the answer and may raise questions of the group interviewed if the response rate is very low.

Interviewing: Practically all persons can become good interviewers. Generally, the two hardest hurdles are (1) lack of confidence and (2) controlling interviewers so they do not bias the results. Confidence is more a factor of (1) experience and (2) belief and knowledge of the survey. Good orientation will aid greatly in gaining confidence and also in avoiding bias. Most

interviewers on short term assignments of this nature will key or reflect the leader. If you indicate the seriousness of your purpose and you follow-up by reading the questionnaires and debriefing the interviewers, you will find most interviewers will follow directions. Interviewing in person and by telephone is demanding work and its arduousness should not be underestimated. Knowing the questionnaire and gaining self confidence are quite crucial; role playing and orientation plus careful first week supervision will help immeasurably.

As much as possible, we have trained our interviewers to be quietly aggressive with the imperative that they are the interviewer and that we desire the public's response, not the interviewer's response. A good interview is much like a ping-pong game with one asking the question and the other answering the question. Be extremely honest in any communication given to the interviewee. In no case, promise anything that you do not expect to produce. Often, the hardest job is not to get involved in matters not pertinent to the study. Another difficult job in interviewing is terminating the interview.

Why do people like to be interviewed despite all the frauds and misstatements sometimes involved in pseudosurveying? Human beings are basically social animals and it is difficult to resist communicating about ourselves and helping others.

One caution - we have found better and more interviews can be accomplished when the interviewer and the interviewee do not know each other. It is difficult to tell your grandson that you are having money trouble and that your gall bladder has flared up!

Collection and tabulation: The method of collection and tabulation should be decided on before going into the field. Generally, you will want to check all questionnaires shortly after receipt so that any deficiencies can be cleared up with the interviewer. Mentioned earlier was that you should have decided on problems to be solved and the type of answers (such as age group, priority of workshop topics and experience) should have been set up prior to the questionnaire so that you had the information you desire.

Analysis and Write-Up: Since you already have decided on your target areas and the questions to be asked, you have your report partially written before you accumulate any data. Statistical analysis, other than simple counts, is limited by your available help.

Most reports follow a standardized pattern of 1) brief summary - not over one page, 2) background of problem, i.e. need for consumer education in your neighborhood, 3) procedures followed, i.e. sampling, questionnaire used, collection, etc., 4) results by various areas or questions, with accompanying answers, 5) conclusions, and 6) recommendations. You might care to make this available to your advisory committee. A one-page report to interviewees might whet their appetites. A short release to media sources would be fruitful for keeping attention on your workshop. A pre-survey release would also help interviewees know more about the proposed survey and would increase acceptance.

Many good studies will show you clues and data that you may not have realized existed. Don't be afraid of serendipity. However, most of the knowledge you will have suspected or known before but now you have further evidence.

The real test of the survey is what is done with the data. Hopefully, it has helped pinpoint who are your target audiences, their concerns and their preferences for the workshop.

THE WORKSHOP COMMUNITY--SOME TARGET AUDIENCES AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS

A community is "a group of people who seem to be held together by certain common interests, concerns, contacts, and feelings of attachment to a given area. It is a combination of both social and geographic dimensions. It may be large or small ..."[1]

One of the first steps in planning a community consumer education workshop is to identify the communities (or groups with common concerns) that you wish to serve. For the purposes of this booklet, we will focus on four target groups that have special consumer education needs: the low income, the elderly, the black minority and the handicapped. The Office of Consumer Affairs' publication, "An Approach to Consumer Education for Adults," states some characteristics and problems of the first three groups mentioned:

Low Income: Food stamps are commonly used by the low income consumer to purchase food. Used, or second-hand, clothing is often bought at budget stores, where sizes may be hard to find and selection is limited. Often, the consumer is forced by income to live in housing that is crowded, dilapidated, poorly-insulated, and lacking decent toilet and kitchen facilities. Most of this housing is rented rather than owned, and some low income consumers do not have a lease or have trouble understanding the lease they do have. Household furnishings are often of poor quality, requiring frequent replacement. Medical and

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[1]Dyer, Del and Gene McMurtry, 4-H/CRD Youth in Action Improving Their Communities, Extension Division, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Publication 486, Blacksburg, Virginia, Reprinted 1976, p. 75.

dental costs are extremely expensive relative to the low income group's financial situations.

Public transportation if it is available, also poses problems with its high costs, limited space, and/or inconvenience. Credit is something practically unknown to this group, and employment is often unstable.

Elderly: Inadequate nutrition is a major problem of the elderly. This can be due to factors such as limited income, lack of or inability to use transportation to the grocery, little motivation or energy to prepare an adequate diet, and lack of resources (financial or knowledge) to prepare special diets. Aged persons may be forced not to take advantage of savings through buying in quantity because of lack of storage space or a preference to buy-smaller amounts. Maintaining housing can also be difficult. A house may become more than a senior citizen cares to or is able to keep up, and housekeepers are often unavailable or expensive. The need for health care usually increases with age. Medicare has helped to alleviate a large portion of these costs for the elderly, but they still face the medicare application procedure, the possibility of health frauds, and/or the choice of a nursing home. In addition to the same transportation problems as the low income, many senior citizens are faced with a service that is inadequate to meet their special physical needs.

Blacks: As in all population groups, consumer problems will vary greatly according to age or socio-economic status; however, this racial minority does have some problems that are different from the overall national population.

A large number of blacks are urban dwellers. They suffer more than other groups from the hardships of relocating upon being forced to move from the rundown inner city areas. Blacks must often deal with discrimination when searching for better housing, applying for credit, and finding health care. These problems are geometrically increased if poverty is also a factor. And educational opportunities for blacks have traditionally been far below those of other consumers. (Keep in mind that blacks who fit into the other categories discussed will experience the problems particular to that group, also.)

Handicapped: Problems of the handicapped will vary according to the type of disability. However, for the purposes of this manual, "handicapped" will be used to refer to physical impairments (other than problems with sight, hearing, or speech), especially those that confine the person to a wheelchair.

One of the main problems encountered by the handicapped is that of structural barriers. For persons with limited ambulatory means, housing with ramps, wider doorways, and toilet railings may be hard to find. Public buildings (such as a grocery store, restaurant, courthouse, or school) with ramps, elevators, and wide parking spaces may not exist in his community. Something as simple as a curb at a crosswalk could limit a handicapped person's mobility.

Most public transportation services do not make provisions for wheelchairs, and riding in a private car may require another person to drive.

Employment opportunities for the handicapped are another limited resource. Not only may the person encounter structural barriers at

the place of prospective employment, but he may also face the problem of being passed over in favor of a less severely handicapped job applicant--if the employer would even consider hiring a handicapped employee.

Depending on the severity of his impairment, the person could possibly have trouble with reaching a wall telephone to dial it, opening a can of food, or buttoning a shirt.

And the medical bills, of course, may pose a financial burden on the person and his family. His requirements for rehabilitative services and/or special equipment (such as a wheelchair, walker, prosthetic, etc.) may be additional expenses, depending on his eligibility for public assistance.

When planning a community consumer education workshop for these target groups, keep in mind these generalities about each audience. Methods of handling these problems can be ideal topics for the workshop.

WHO ARE THE POTENTIAL SPEAKERS?

Before deciding upon a speaker, consider two points--his knowledge of the subject and his ability to effectively communicate this knowledge to the workshop participants. You will probably have an impressive pool of talent in your locality on which to draw. "Businessmen, physicians, attorneys, (high) school teachers..., college professors from area institutions, bankers, local government officials, and representatives from State and Federal agencies will also willingly speak on topics in their areas of expertise."[1] The Office of

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[1]Lowe, Ross E. and Patricia Tresch, Consumer Education Nights, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Springfield, Illinois, n.d., p. 5.

the Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Illinois, gives some ideas of possible topics and speakers in its publication Consumer Education Nights:

Topics	Speakers
Financing a College Education	Financial Aids Officer, Area University
Fraudulent Practices You Should Know About	Federal Trade Commission Representative
Getting the Most From Food Stamps	Public Assistance Official
How to Buy Furniture	Home Economics Teacher
How to Buy Appliances	Home Economics Teacher
How to Buy a Used Car	Auto Mechanics Teacher
How to Save Money on Clothing	Home Extension Advisor
Steps in Personal Budgeting	Consumer Education Teacher
Ways to Save on Food	USDA Representative
Ways to Save on Auto Repairs	Auto Mechanics Teacher
Ways to Save on Health Dollars	Member, Local Medical Society
What You Should Know About Social Security	Field Representative, Social Security Administration
What You Should Know About Life Insurance Policies	Member, Local Association of Insurance Agents
What You Should Know About Credit	Credit Bureau Manager
What You Should Know About Home Buying	Member, Home Builders Association
What You Should Know About Wills and Estates	Member, Local Legal Society
Your Rights as a Tenant	Legal Aid Representative
Your Welfare Rights	Legal Aid Representative

This is only a beginning list. Using your creative thinking, think of the many people who can be both informative and knowledgeable. For example, in buying a home, you can draw on realtors, builders, bankers, other financial institutions, appraisers, educators, persons who recently bought, building inspectors and government officials. Panels well managed can bring out diverse points of views. Remember, speakers often bring their own audience.

HOW TO RECRUIT AND WORK WITH VOLUNTEERS

In carrying out your Community Consumer Education Workshop, many of your most diligent workers will be volunteers. Therefore, it is important for you to know some general guidelines for recruiting and working with volunteers. Here are some ideas from the National Center for Voluntary Action, "Recruiting Volunteers", pp. 10 and 10A.

Recruiting volunteers:

- Community groups will be one of your best contacts in searching for volunteers. Many of these groups will be looking for a worthwhile project or may already have special purposes that coincide with your project. These groups are numerous--church groups, high school or college clubs, fraternal organizations, men's and women's service clubs, retiree groups, professional organizations, etc. And they can be approached in various ways. You could speak about your project at one of their meetings and indicate how volunteers can help. You could send a letter, outlining your project, to each president and ask that its contents be shared with the whole group. You could include an announcement of your project in the organization's newsletter and include a request for volunteers.

- Public media (newspapers, radio, TV) are another way of reaching potential volunteers. (See the section, Publicity and Advanced Marketing for details on working with the media.) This method of appealing for volunteers may be quite effective if accompanied by a story about your project.
- Bulletin boards and posters placed in strategic areas can reach selected groups. Consider churches, grocery stores, schools, libraries, banks, barber shops, etc. You should include information about the volunteer opportunities, a brief description of the project and when and how you can be contacted.
- Personal contacts, or word-of-mouth advertising, can prove to be most effective. "Whether in one-to-one conversation, over the telephone to a friend, getting together in a social situation, in a speech to a group, there is no substitute for personal contact between recruiters and potential volunteers."[1]

Working with Volunteers:

- Upon knowing the person's qualifications, place him in a job that makes use of his existing skills. In general, he will be happier knowing that he can handle the assigned task, and you will save time in his training and orientation. These qualifications will usually surface in a conversation.
- Make sure that your volunteer has an opportunity to gain as well as to contribute. Serving his "self-interests" usually maintains motivation and results in better committee placements. Make an effort to discover any of his "hidden" interests during the conversation.

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[1] National Center for Voluntary Action, Volunteer Recruiting: Views, Techniques, and Comments, Washington, D.C., May, 1974, p. 20.

- Provide the recruit with training, orientation, and a "job" description. In these, be sure to state exactly what the volunteer job is and explain why the volunteer is doing a particular task. This way, he can see how his work fits into the whole, he can be a more effective spokesman for the project, and he can know exactly what is expected of him.
- Make sure the volunteer has one supervisor to whom he can report, turn to if he has any questions or problems, and share "success stories" with. This is necessary for a smooth, efficient operation.
- See to it that the volunteer regularly reports back to his supervisor (usually his task force chairman) in order to appraise the progress of the project and to help ward off any problems. Reporting can be done in writing, through personal conferences, or in group meetings.
- It is also important to keep your volunteer informed, particularly about the project as a whole. When kept informed, his work will mean more for him and, again, he will be a better spokesman for the project.
- In a nutshell, treat your volunteer as a paid employee. If treated as one, he will be more likely to perform as one. (He may even call upon you later for a reference.)
- Above all else, recognize the efforts of your volunteer. Since he is receiving no money for his work, "pay" him with a thank-you or a figurative pat on the back (such as a personal note, a recognition party, a certificate, a letter to his employer, etc.) Remember--without the volunteer, your accomplishments may not have been possible.

STEPS TOWARD ORGANIZATION

A. Select a steering committee

Systematic planning is a must if the workshop is to be successful, and it is the responsibility of the steering committee to see that this planning is accomplished. The steering committee's leadership and motivation to carry through the project are, likewise, important factors for success. Your first task as coordinator *pro tem* is to convene responsible persons for this committee.

It is recommended that you select these committee members from within the geographical area that your project will be serving, while also making sure that those chosen are familiar with community resources that can be utilized for an effective workshop program. Committee members should also have a feel for the consumer problems and concerns of the local residents, particularly of the workshop's target audience. You might consider such persons as human service providers, members of local consumer groups, educators, consumer leaders, local government officials, and service organization members, to mention a few.

Schiller states that "the appropriate size of the steering committee depends in part on the work to be done and the time that can be given by various people. The ideal group is small enough to get the job done efficiently, but it should have an outreach to a large influential audience for a multiple-perspectives discussion of the problem." (p. 4) Harris *et al.* recommend from five to seven members for a workable steering committee.

Those invited to join the steering committee should be contacted individually and, upon their acceptance, should be sent a letter

informing them of the time and place of the first meeting, their responsibilities as committee members, and a proposed agenda of the first meeting.

The specific responsibilities of the steering committee include:

(1) determining the issue(s) and target group(s) to be addressed by the project,

(2) determining the goal and objectives of the workshop,

(3) electing a coordinator from the steering committee members,

(4) leading one of the task forces,

(5) appointing task force members,

(6) reporting periodically to the coordinator,

(7) serving as liaison among coordinator, other task forces, and his task force members,

(8) determining the exact format of the workshop, and

(9) promoting systematic planning of the project.

B. Determine issue(s) and audience(s)

One of the first tasks of the steering committee is to identify the issues of concern for the specific consumer group with which you wish to deal. Earlier, we discussed some problems that are particular to the low income, elderly, handicapped, and racial minorities. We have also indicated, and hopefully generated, some ideas for workshop topics. After sharing these sections with the steering committee members, decide on your workshop's target audience(s) and choose the topic(s) which will help these citizens to deal with their problems. That is, the steering committee must review the consumer concerns in its locality and consider those which will aid the target groups in coping with their particular problems.

To ascertain the consumer problems in your community, refer back to

the guidelines on pages 6-17. Hopefully, you have selected committee members who, with the help of these guidelines, will be quite aware of the concerns of the local target groups. And, remember, it is desirable to hear from each member of the committee.

If you prefer to focus on target audiences other than the ones we have discussed, make sure that you deal with their particular consumer problems (which may be the same or different from those on pages 17-20). Whichever target group(s) you choose, the guidelines for ascertaining their consumer problems will prove just as effective.

C. Determine workshop goal and objectives

Once the steering committee has determined the target group(s) and problem(s) that it wishes to focus on, the next step is to decide on the goal of the workshop and the objectives for reaching that goal. This is an important task, since much of the planning for and conducting of the workshop sessions will depend on the goal and objectives of the project. Establishing a goal and objectives will also be a helpful gauge for later evaluation of your efforts. Share with them your results from consumer groups.

The goal is the purpose of the workshop project--what you want the workshop to accomplish. Before discussing the goal, review the consumer problems and needs of your target group(s). These will be instrumental in determining the goal of your workshop. You may decide to focus on a problem that is more pressing or one that affects a majority of your target population. Also, consider the amount of time that will be available at your workshop. You want to be sure to limit or expand your goal so that it can be ac-

complished within the time frame you are considering. And establish a goal that is realistic. A reasonable goal (one that can be accomplished in the allotted amount of time, can deal with a problem or meet needs, and can benefit most of your participants) is a good goal.

Objectives are the pathway of achieving your goal. A list of objectives will help you to stay within the limits of your goal while planning the workshop, as well as help you to recruit groups and individuals that can identify with your specific aims, claims McAlister. (p. 6) Your objectives, a specific outline of how you intend to accomplish your goal, should include what is to be done, resources for doing it, who it will help, and the results that are desired.

D. Funding

Regardless of the magnitude of your project, some funds and/or services will be necessary to stage the consumer education workshop. You will need space, equipment, duplicating services, secretarial services, postage, name tags, telephone expenses, travel money for speakers, etc. Hopefully, the "community" nature of your project will help to defray some of the costs through donations. Here are several examples of resources which may prove fruitful:

- Your own group's funds may be available. This might be particularly true if your project meshes with the special interests of your organization.

- Depending on your audience, you may want to consider charging a registration fee for attendance at the workshop. But be careful not to discriminate against those who are not financially able to afford the fee. (One solution to this, <u>if</u> your funds are sufficient, might be to offer scholarships, especially if a meal is served during the workshop.)

- Another idea is to have two or more community groups to co-sponsor the workshop. Their combined resources may be suf-

ficient to cover the cost of conducting the workshop, and co-sponsorship is a good way for groups to gain "community visibility."

In-kind services are just as good as money. Try to get space donated from a business or use a community building, speakers who won't charge, and various other services from community groups. See if a local business or the local chamber of commerce would care to offer door prizes and refreshments.

Elect someone from the steering committee to be the financial coordinator. This person will need to keep accurate records for reporting after the workshop is completed. Also, draw up a budget for approval by the steering committee. These tasks need to be done before any money is handled.

E. Determine workshop format

1. Date and time

When selecting the exact date and time for your workshop, keep your target audience in mind. Schedule it at a convenient time for your audience; and avoid selecting a date that conflicts with other community events, such as ball games, evening church services, weekend holidays, etc. The amount of time for the workshop depends upon the travel distance involved for the participants and the workshop topics. Allow some time for the participants to get to know each other and to talk to the speakers. And above all, allow sufficient time for planning.

2. Workshop session topics

Your goal, objectives, and the needs of your target audience are the factors on which to base the decision of the sessions to be offered at the workshop.

The steering committee should design tentative workshop titles that are interesting and informative. The titles are what prospective participants will use to gauge the relativity of the workshops to their problems. Often, multiple workshops will help. These titles can also generate excitement about attending.

3. Design of workshop

The workshop design will depend on the amount of time allotted and on the subject matter presented. The critical element to the success of your design is allowing enough time for the audience's involvement. Their involvement increases their stake in, ownership of, and practice of the presentations. Ways to provide an opportunity for audience involvement include:

- small group discussion after the speaker's presentation;
- panel discussion, after which panelists lead small group discussion; and
- role playing by audience members, whereby skills presented in the speaker's address are practiced.

(For a more detailed discussion of involvement, see Section B, Informal learning, on pages 47-48.)

Schiller (p. 7) shares with us an example of a workable design that depends, as suggested earlier, upon the time allotted and the subject matter presented:

Full day	Afternoon-Evening	Evening
Keynote Speaker and Panel with Various Perspectives		
9:30-noon	4:30-6:00	7:00-8:00
Lunch 12:00	Dinner 6:00-7:00	
Workshop Session(s) with Resource People/Speakers		
1:30-3:00	7:00-9:00	8:00-9:00
Wrap-Up/Review/Total Group		
3:30-4:00	9:00-9:30	9:00-9:30

F. Organize for efficiency

Up to this point, the person or group who initiated the project probably has been the coordinator *pro tem*. It is now desirable for the steering committee to elect a permanent coordinator and recorder. (The remaining steering committee members will be expected to head the task forces.) The project initiator may be elected coordinator, but this is up to the steering committee.

The permanent coordinator has the responsibility of meeting periodically with the task force leaders, either individually or as a group. He also must maintain a good information flow among the committees, be prepared to help resolve any problems that may arise, oversee the progress of the planning and implementation phases, and help in the evaluation.

The recorder's responsibilities include: maintaining accurate records of meeting proceedings, distributing the meeting recommendations to all committee members, arranging meetings and sending reminders to all members.

As previously mentioned, the other steering committee members will be expected to head the task forces. These will probably include:

speaker task force
space/equipment/meals task force
publicity task force
invitation/registration task force
evaluation task force

When members have selected a task force to lead, they may begin recruiting persons interested in working on their committee. The leader of each task force should select a recorder and set a meeting time for the group. Each task force should function on its own schedule. However, these individual schedules should be in cooperation with the entire project, since oftentimes the progress of one task force depends upon the work accomplished by another.

The responsibilities of these task forces will be discussed throughout this text, and a checklist of duties can be found in the appendix, for easy reference.

G. Approach speakers/session leaders

The task of finding speakers or session leaders needs to be accomplished fairly early in the planning stages, since much of the publicity depends on this. Following are some guidelines for completing this task.

The speaker task force, as well as all other task forces, should be informed of the plans to date, such as the target group(s), workshop design, session topics, goal, and objectives. With these in mind, the entire membership should be offered a chance to express suggestions.

When generating ideas for potential speaker(s), members should consider his knowledge of the subject as well as his ability to communicate this knowledge in an understandable manner. Task force members should also be aware of the potential speaker's viewpoints on the issues. The design of the workshop (discussed on pages 30-31) may determine which speakers to choose; e.g., you want to choose someone who feels comfortable in a panel situation or someone who will not hamper group participation. In other words, try to involve a speaker whose own goals can be achieved, as well as those of the workshop project.

Issue your invitations as soon as possible, and request a prompt reply. You may invite potential speakers by phone or in writing, but be sure that they receive the following information in writing: conference location (obtained from space/equipment/meals task force), date, time, and planned duration; conference goal and objectives; type of audience expected; workshop design; exact nature of the subject he will be covering; and the exact fee, if any, you are offering. You also need to ask if he will be distributing any handouts; and, if so, who will be responsible for duplicating them--you or he. Remember to inquire about any special needs for his presentation--audio visual equipment, blackboard, etc. (This should be shared with the space/equipment/meals task force so that arrangements can be made to have special equipment available.) For the publicity committee, you should request his vita and picture; and send his name and accurate title to the invitation/ registration task force.

Once he has committed himself, send a letter of confirmation, thanking him for his acceptance and verifying such information as location, date, time, and special needs.

H. Arrange location/special equipment/meals

Handling the physical arrangements of the workshop is the duty of the space/equipment/meals task force. This task force must be aware of the plans thus far in order to find facilities to accommodate these plans. That is, before choosing a location, this task force must know such things as an estimate of how many participants to expect, how many individual rooms will be necessary for conducting separate workshop sessions, and the date and time selected for the workshop. Of course, this means the task force must establish criteria for the facility: being available on the date and time selected, being large enough to accommodate the anticipated audience, having one room or auditorium large enough for total group sessions, and having enough smaller rooms for individual workshop sessions. (It is not advisable to hold these individual workshop sessions at the same time in different corners of a large room.) Also, keep in mind any special needs of the participants. For example, if your target group is the elderly or handicapped, make easy access one of your criteria (i.e., don't decide on a location only accessible by twenty steps). Once these criteria are known, the task force can set out to choose a location for the workshop. (Again, hopefully, the "community" nature of the project will result in no charge for the facilities.) Check first on facilities that may be available from the sponsor. If

this does not prove fruitful, check out community buildings such as churches, banks, schools, or community centers that would meet the criteria established. If still unsuccessful, the task force may need to approach conference facilities, such as hotels or motels. Budget constraints must be uppermost in mind if facilities are rented. Once the location is chosen, be sure to share this information with other task forces (especially the publicity task force), and get a confirmation of the reservation in writing. It also might be a good idea to ask for a map or, at least, directions.

Any special equipment needs should also be handled by this task force. One responsibility is to work with the speaker's task force to learn of the needs that the speakers and workshop leaders might have. These could include audio-visual equipment, screen, easel, blackboard, podium, etc. The task force should also be familiar with the room set-up that the speaker or leader desires and arrange chairs and tables to suit his needs. It is desirable to choose a location that owns this special equipment; but if this is not possible, try to borrow what you need from schools, community colleges, or other area organizations.

If the workshop is designed to include meals, several alternatives can be considered by the task force. Participants could be asked to bring sandwiches, boxed lunches could be ordered, or meals could be prepared at the facility. If you decide to have group meals, a separate dining area should be available so that table setting and clearing would not interfere with the program.

Should the budget allow, meals could be subsidized for participants who have limited resources. It would be feasible to let the participants have meals on their own, but more people are likely to stay for the afternoon or evening session if the meal is provided at the site. Whichever alternative you choose, be sure to announce meal arrangements in the workshop literature so that participants can budget their expenses in advance. Be sure to confirm in writing any meal arrangements that are made with the facility, and set a cut-off date for refunds to participants. For an evening-only workshop, plan time for a coffee break and group interaction.

I. Build mailing list of invitees/prepare invitations and pre-registration materials

The invitation/registration task force is responsible for devising a mailing list of prospective participants. In making their initial plans, the steering committee may have begun a list of individuals or groups to involve; if so, the invitee list could be built on to this. The list should include community leaders, organizations and agencies catering to your target group, volunteer groups, educators, media representatives, and especially individual members of your target group--perhaps the clientele of your steering committee and task force members. It is the responsibility of the invitation/registration task force to build this list to its fullest potential, while keeping in mind the physical constraints of the workshop facilities. A good way to avoid overloading the capacity of the facilities is to issue invitations

periodically. That is, you do not need to have a complete mailing list before mailing invitations and pre-registration materials. Future invitations can be mailed as the mailing list is expanded and can be gauged by the number who pre-register.

The invitations themselves should include information such as the name and purpose of the workshop, when and where it is scheduled, directions, speakers' names, topics of workshop sessions, sponsor's name, deadline for pre-registration, any fees, and workshop agenda.

It is very desirable to mail individual invitations and pre-registration materials to those on your list. However, if the mailing cost prohibits this, consider printing these in the local newspaper (while working closely with the publicity task force) and distributing them through other agencies. Or, if you know of organizations that publish a newsletter, ask about including an invitation and pre-registration form with the next mailing. On the invitation, you can even ask for the names of others interested in the topic. Depending on the number of replies from each of these methods, you can determine the most effective way for issuing future invitations.

Workshop day (or night) will proceed more smoothly if pre-registration is encouraged. The pre-registration materials should include information about the participant, such as his name, address, phone number, occupation, workshop choices, and a place to indicate meal reservations (if a meal will be served). Include a cut-off date for refunds, name of the person or organization to whom checks should be made payable, and a deadline for pre-

registration. Be sure to indicate a return address. Any member of the invitation/registration task force could agree to receive these, and he should begin a registration list as soon as the forms start coming in. (This registration list will be used to check-off participants as they arrive at the workshop. The task force will also need to make name tags from this list.)

Where meals are to be served during the workshop, be sure to keep the space/equipment/meals task force updated on the number of participants indicating they would like a meal reservation. Fee payments that are received in the mail should be given to the financial coordinator, who should send receipts to participants who have paid.

If you plan to waiver fees for some participants, you may want to include a separate form for this purpose. On this form, you would need to obtain the person's name, family size, income, and any other information you see necessary for deciding if the person should be granted a fee waiver (such as age, employment status, etc.). Be sure to indicate that this information will be handled confidentially. These applications for a fee waiver should be returned to the invitation/registration task force. Based on criteria that has been pre-determined by this task force, the decision concerning the fee waiver should be reported to the applicant as soon as possible.

If inviting low-income persons, you may need to consider some alternatives to their stamping a pre-registration mail-in form. You could include a self-addressed, stamped envelope; however, this could prove to be costly. Forms could be collected through

agencies or organizations having the same target group. These would need to be gathered periodically by a task force member. Telephone pre-registrations could be accepted; however, a written form is preferable. If none of these methods seem feasible, you may decide not to have pre-registration if it will interfere with the response from your target group. Just keep in mind that pre-registration does make for a smoother registration time at the workshop, and it does allow a chance to consider requests for fee waivers.

When timing the distribution of invitations and pre-registration materials, be sure to allow a realistic amount of time for output and feedback. Send these materials with enough lead time for the publicity to have been initiated, the information to reach the invitees, the invitees to make arrangements to attend, any fee waivers to be considered, the pre-registration materials to be returned, and for additional invitations to be issued if the response is low. As you can see, the timing of this task force will depend largely on the size of the workshop, with smaller-capacity workshop projects requiring less lead time than larger ones.

PUBLICITY AND ADVANCED MARKETING

A. Use of themes

The success of this workshop will greatly depend on its ability to develop a positive public awareness of its work. Publicity and advance marketing is the mechanism through which most of the community is acquainted with the workshop's purposes.

A theme can be quite useful in stimulating the interest of your target groups (low income, elderly, and racial minorities). But for

the theme to be effective, it and the program must be based on the needs of your target audience(s) in terms that they can perceive. The theme of this workshop should reflect those problems which your target groups are finding most difficult to cope with.

While today's family is troubled, it is also strong and resilient. For most families, uncertainty and concern for the future haven't caused just a "live only for today" attitude. Instead, it has created a desire to learn how to cope with today and prepare for tomorrow. Your workshop will be addressing these objectives. Therefore, it is these objectives that an effective theme can be based on. The theme or themes should be in terms that the audience perceives.

B. Hitchhiking with established groups/programs

In developing an effective public relations strategy, the publicity task force should make use of certain available resources. In any community, you will usually find an attitude of willingness to help volunteer organizations. The local media (radio, T.V., and print) will usually be willing to offer constructive advice on the type of publicity you need. An interested corporation executive might be able to render the services of his company's public relations department. Advertising agencies might voluntarily assume publicity programs for local non-profit organizations. A local college might provide able assistance. Local organizations (Jaycees, Lions Club, Toastmasters, etc.) can be useful in promoting your workshops. Finally, children are often eager to help paint posters or distribute flyers.

Don't hesitate to enlist cosponsors of the program. This may include diverse groups such as Chamber of Commerce, Extension Home-

makers, Luncheon Clubs, Bankers, Garden Clubs, AARP, Distributive Education Clubs (DECA), community colleges, NAACP, Homeowners Clubs, Retired Army Officers (RAO), Future Homemakers, religious groups, Retired Teachers Associations, 4-H Clubs, union organizations, retail merchants associations, builders associations, county medical organizations, credit unions and others. A group that is paid to do another job can become a volunteer for your group such as a realtor or a housing (HUD) official. You may have just the program for a non-profit debt counselor, a minister who counsels prospective newlyweds, or a financial institution official with prospective borrowers.

C. How to get and utilize radio time

Radio has adjusted to the age of T.V. It permeates every segment of society and offers varied publicity opportunities. Radio is frequently underrated because it lacks the prestige of T.V., yet it is a medium that reachs vast and varied audiences at small costs. In the hands of creative promoters, radio can achieve incredible results.

Since radio stations select their audiences, your publicity committee can use them effectively in reaching target groups. Since your target group is the family unit, your committee might chose the station with the broadest appeal. While the top 40's type of station has traditionally been one that only caters to teenagers, you might find a surprisingly large number of young families (whom you are very concerned with) listening to these stations. Don't just go on traditional assumptions as to what families listen to; you need to employ your own intuition of how your community uses the broadcast medium.

Nothing is as important as the rapport you can establish with the personnel who run your community's stations. Commentators, disc jockeys, and entertainers often take on public service causes and generate considerable enthusiasm for local projects. Persuade the most popular ones to "adopt" your cause. They will also look out for your interest; for example, seeing that you get your proper share of public service announcement time. And, don't forget to provide all local radio stations with every release that goes to newspapers and T.V.

D. How to utilize print media/newspaper, plant papers, school papers

"The print media can provide limitless opportunities for coverage, if skillfully cultivated. It is safe to say that newspapers are the most important vehicle for continuing exposure available to non-profit voluntary organizations."[1]

Newspaper editors will generally be receptive to your plea for help. But you must cultivate their cooperation through personal contact. Rmember that even though your PR goals are typical of all PR goals, you have a distinct advantage in that you, as a voluntary organization, have the right to ask for free space, editorial support, or other special considerations. A good volunteer PR director can win an editor as an invaluable ally.

In your relationship with the local press, your voluntary organization has other strong points in its favor. Since all newspapers are in need of good human interest stories, newspaper editors

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[1]National Center for Voluntary Action, Telling Your Story--Ideas Local Publicity, page 3.

will usually be more than cooperative in publicizing your activities. Your volunteer program is especially suited to the newsman's plight in that it is one of the richest sources of information concerning the community's "good news" (the kinds of activities that show people helping people).

Also note that plant or company papers can be a good way for reaching hundreds or thousands of people in your community with messages tailored to their interests. School newspapers will also give good coverage to volunteer programs. Advertising can be a source of publicity for you. Sometimes department stores, banks, and other businesses and organizations will be in favor of gearing their ads to your volunteer theme.

Remember that good photos can be very useful in telling your story and getting more people interested in it. Either recruit a volunteer photographer or elicit the help of a newspaper's photographer.

E. How to utilize T.V.

Television reaches more people for the longest periods of time in every level of society than any other medium. Although it does offer an enormous potential, it is extremely difficult to "develop creative programming ideas to tap that potential."[1]

The preceding information on how to deal with newspaper editors and reporters applies equally as well to the television's personnel. A local station's news director and reporters should be on your media distribtuion list for all releases. They will often encourage you to come to them for pre-taped news segments.

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[1]Ibid., p. 8.

Since competition for public service time is usually overwhelming, you should make personal contact with the T.V.'s staff members who decide on public service scheduling. This will help to assure your organization its share of T.V. time.

"As a guide to those seeking programming time on local stations, a T.V. executive offers these straightforward tips: 1) approach the right person in the station (normally the station manager or program director), 2) have a definite plan to discuss, 3) have an idea with wide audience appeal, 4) make sure your program ideas are within the station's technical capabilities; 5) don't forget to say thanks."[1]

If you are not successful with the commercial stations, don't forget to approach the public broadcasting stations. Also, if there is an operating cable television in your community, it can offer wide opportunities for publicity.

Note that editors on print media and program directors on electronic media are often "gatekeepers;" ask their advise and heed it.

STEPS TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION

A. Confirm Speakers

About a week before the workshop, the speaker task force should send a letter confirming the arrangements to each of the speakers and leaders. This letter should include confirmation of the date, place, time, fees, responsibilities, and any other arrangements previously agreed upon. If any of the speaker's or leader's hand-

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[1]Ibid.

outs are to be prepared by the task force, these must be completed. The task force should also double check information about the speaker/leader that will be used in his introduction, and these facts should be given to the person doing the introduction.

B. Prepare registration and handout materials

By now (about one week before the workshop), most all of the pre-registration forms should be in, so you should have a good idea of who and how many to expect. The invitation/registration task force should now organize for efficient registration at the workshop. A list of participants should be prepared in alphabetical order for quick location when the participants check in during registration. The task force should prepare a detailed agenda for participants. Name tags for each participant should also be ready for distribution when they check in. If the participants are divided into smaller groups, these group assignments can be noted in the corner of the name tag (i.e., I and II or A and B). Any packets of information (such as agendas, meal tickets, evaluation forms, etc.) should also be organized for easy distribution at the registration table. Blank name tags should be available for participants who have not pre-registered (walk-ins), and a sheet of paper should be there for walk-ins to sign their names, addresses, phones, etc.

If you have not arranged for pre-registration, it will be necessary to organize even more for the registration period. For example, you will have to have additional people to work at the registration desk, and you will need to make a registration form (or a sheet for names, addresses, etc.) for each person to complete

upon his arrival. Name tags should also be used, but each participant can prepare his own. Be sure to have plenty of pens and markers handy.

D. Make confirmations of location/special equipment/meals

The space/equipment/meals task force should also be making confirmations about this same time. The building, times of use, opening and clean-up arrangements, and equipment use should be double checked. If meals are to be prepared at the facility or sent in, the invitation/registration task force should be able to tell this task force how many meals are reserved. You probably should slightly increase this number of meal reservations in order to accomodate walk-ins; however, some of those who pre-registered will not show up due to emergencies or last-minute change of plans. Just remember that any additional meals must be paid for. (Depending on the facility, more lead time for confirming the number of meals to be prepared may be required. Be sure you know this policy and comply with it.)

E. Prepare facilities

Several hours before the workshop is scheduled to begin, final preparations must be made.

The registration desk should be in a conspicuous location near the entrance. Where the participants are not familiar with the facilities, signs should be posted, indicating directions to the meeting rooms. Give a friendly and participative reception to your invitees, as initial impressions are long lasting. If chairs and tables are movable, the session rooms should be arranged as the leader or speaker requested. Microphone, podium, audio-visual equipment, screen, etc. should be set up as necessary. Check to see that all the equipment works. If

a coffee break is included in the agenda, these arrangements should be ready to go (coffee, cups, sugar, cream, spoons, napkins?). All the project's workers should have on name tags. Make sure that workers have been designated to greet speakers and leaders. And keep in mind that, even with all the planning and organization before the workshop, it is imperative to remain flexible, should last-minute changes be necessary.

Now--sit back and relax for a while. You've done all that you can so far. Your weeks of hard work are about to pay off.

THE CONFERENCE ITSELF

A. Timing and implementation still crucial

After you have had your short breather, it's time to go again. Since your speakers and leaders should be arriving a few minutes early, make sure that someone is there to meet them and to show them where they will be speaking.

You should have already checked on coffee, seating arrangements, special equipment, registration table, etc. to be sure that these matters are satisfactory.

Now, the thing to remember is to <u>start on time</u>! If you are behind in this area, everything following will be thrown off schedule. Please remember that all of your participants, speakers, leaders, and workers have managed to arrange their schedules around this workshop, so the least you can do is to be punctual. In other words, keep to your agenda.

B. Informal learning . . .

The success of your workshop's topic presentations will be partially determined by your ability to provide an atmosphere con-

ducive to informal learning. Participants have to have the opportunity to share their identities, concerns, and ideas in order to feel some involvement in the workshop's process.

There are certain things you can do to make sure informal learning happens in your workshop. You might start off the meeting with an icebreaking technique. Have everyone introduce themselves and have them tell a few things about themselves they wouldn't normally tell.

It might also be helpful to divide the workshop into small groups of two or three people. The discussion within these groups would be recorded and then these smaller groups should meet with two other small groups to form medium groups. The discussion in the medium groups should be recorded and then these medium groups should report to the whole group what information they found. In the beginning, it might be helpful to guarantee anonymity in order to assure free participation by all. If this process is done correctly, everyone will have an investment in the workshop. It is also helpful to allow the whole group to have a question and answer period to make sure all information is understood and is available to everyone.

Just about anything you can do to make people comfortable and relaxed will contribute to the informal learning process.

C. Making Murphy's Law work for you

Remember the earlier warning to remain flexible? This warning was issued because of Murphy's Law. A portion of this "law" states that if anything can possibly go wrong, it will. So the answer to any prospective problems is to have alternative plans.

Say, for example, that one of the session leaders gets sick on the day of the workshop and can't attend. You could recruit a stand-by

leader if one were pre-arranged. Or, you could combine groups of participants, depending on how your sessions are to be run.

The main idea here is to make the workshop so informal that any problems or errors encountered do not jeopardize the whole project.

D. Publicity at the conference

If the publicity task force has maintained and encouraged good relations with the press, it is possible that some media representatives may be interested enough to attend the workshop for publicity purposes. This is good. The more publicity the project has, the more people will be conscious of the issue of consumer education.

But would you feel comfortable with the press running around? Would you feel free enough to have a radio broadcast during the workshop? Would you be bothered by newspaper people stopping things to take pictures? Relax. When the "unreached" public receives this information, perhaps they will realize that they <u>can</u> have the knowledge necessary to deal with their consumer-related problems. And this increased awareness is one of the major reasons for conducting this consumer education project. Therefore, channel this publicity to work for you by assisting the media representatives who are present. Have a member of the publicity task force to accompany the press and to answer questions.

Welcome and encourage all the good publicity that the project can get.

E. The unannounced guests

As mentioned previously, you can expect walk-ins (those who have not pre-registered). Some of these walk-ins could be leaders in the community, such as a local government official, an organization

president, etc. How are these people handled--are they given a special introduction, are they overlooked, or what?

You must be careful not to inhibit the participants in the workshop, so it may be unwise to make a big deal about these "special" unannounced guests. However, you do want to promote group interaction and, thereby, the introduction of your participants. Likewise, the face-to-face meeting of your community leaders and their constituents may provide an opportunity for them to exchange points of view.

Therefore, it may be desirable to treat all participants equally, and let them discover for themselves (during the introductions) any special affiliations. You may, however, want to make sure that the press knows of any community leaders in attendance. You might also want to extend a personal welcome to these folks, answer any questions they may have, and offer them any particular literature that may be helpful in their decision-making, community projects, etc. But while doing these things, make a conscious effort not to make other participants feel unimportant.

F. Getting feedback during the workshop

Getting feedback from participants is the responsibility of the evaluation task force. This task force should prepare an evaluation form prior to the workshop, and it should be distributed when the participants register. Evaluation, however, may be accomplished through techniques in addition to a written form. (See the Evaluation Section, beginning on page 52, for specifics.)

While evaluation after a workshop is a common practice, what many people forget is that evaluation can and should also be carried on during a workshop. While it will be too late to change major plans, many small adjustments can be made along the way to correct problems that appear during the program.

Everyone involved in the workshop should play a part in the evaluation. Feedback is needed from the speakers and participants. Their comments can help improve on future conferences and make your experiences genuine learning ones. It might be useful to reconvene into the total group and make reports of each smaller groups' evaluation. You also might have observers to see to it that all the goals are met.

The major questions to be asked in evaluations involve whether the workshop met its goals and, thereby, addressed the concerns of the participants. In the process of determining answers to these basic questions, evaluations can also provide useful information on any of the workshop details--the format, specific speakers, the facilities, the atmosphere, the interaction.

Evaluation is useless, of course, if you don't get everyone's views and if you don't stop to tally up responses. Don't allow just a few outspoken persons' views to dominate. One person may complain loudly; the silence of everyone else does not necessarily mean agreement with the complainant.

Furthermore, don't expect everyone to agree on every point. The evaluation responses need to be assessed for value. You may decide, for example, that some things people object to still were

worth doing because they were critical to meeting the workshop objectives. In other cases, comments may be invaluable in planning better workshops in the future.

EVALUATIONS--WRITTEN, OBSERVABLE, DELAYED

Evaluation: One basic tenet of good management is to get feedback on what you have done. You now have spent a good amount of energy and intelligence on having your community consumer education awareness workshop. Now like the commander of a combat bomber group in w wartime, you need to have a "picture" of what has happened by debriefing your pilots (speakers) and aerial reconnaissance (surveying of participants). The "picture" may be taken immediately by having your attendees "vote". You may later wish to assess if the mission had lasting effect by taking another picture, i.e., how many participants are doing something about the problems you dealt with. Many of these must be dealt with in terms of your particular problems and solutions. Hence any questionnaire will have to be modified to fit the particular workshop.

Some suggested steps:

1. Collect numerical data of how many persons attended, which workshops did they attend and how many stayed for the complete workshop.

2. Collect impressions, i.e., how many people asked questions; were they relevant questions; how many people stayed afterwards to ask more questions; how many (if any) thanked the speakers for coming and for the group in having the event; how many people (if any) offered their experiences and/or indicated how they might use their new information.

3. Ask your speakers for their reactions. Use questions as in 1 and 2 but also get their judgment and reaction to the event.

4. Collect information from the group by questionnaire as to their evaluation and their reactions. (Note our enclosed sample questionnaire).

5. Later, have a meeting with your advisory group and/or the group you used as a sounding board to go over the information from 1 through 4. Their personal reactions are also important.

6. Later, utilize some preselected criterions to help decide on the effectiveness of your program. You might care to ask each speaker to give one or more "action type of behavior" that they would consider a desirable type of result. For example, a speaker on food buying might select 1) comparison price shopping and 2) utilizing nutritional labeling. The speaker on ways to conserve energy with little or no cost might have as his items to 1) turn down water heater and 2) put up polyethylene over windows. By survey methods, you can find out practices that have been involved. Don't forget the multiplier affect - ask if they have talked to friends and neighbors about the proposed change.

7. Sometimes, you can find out through secondary sources whether the workshop got desired results. If you are teaching people how to complain, you might ask some local retailers, the Better Business Bureau and the Office of Consumer Affairs if there have been any changes. Other criterions might be questions asked by prospective buyers of insulation to sellers; usage of non-profit financial counselors; usage of Consumer Reports and other materials in the public library; any changes in the usage of wills by lower income people and other criterions.

EVALUATION FORM

Sponsoring Agency, Place
Date

DIRECTIONS: Please hand this information to the moderator of the last session that you attend today.

1. What overall ranking would you give this conference?

   ____SUPERIOR ____VERY GOOD ____SATISFACTORY ____FAIR ____UNSATISFACTORY

2. How would you rank the services in each of the following areas?

   A. REGISTRATION ____SUPERIOR____GOOD____SATISFACTORY____FAIR____UNSATISFACTORY
   B. HOSPITALITY ____SUPERIOR____GOOD____SATISFACTORY____FAIR____UNSATISFACTORY
   C. FOOD ____SUPERIOR____GOOD____SATISFACTORY____FAIR____UNSATISFACTORY

3. Rate the following sessions that you attended as to their degree of usefulness relative to helping you to carry out your professional responsibilities (1=Extremely Helpful, 2=Helpful, 3=Somewhat Helpful, 4=Not So Helpful, 5=Unsatisfactory, and 6=Did Not Attend).

TIME	SESSION TITLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	COMMENTS
Mon. P.M. - 7 P.M.	Parks and Mitchell Conducting A Consumer Education Workshop							
Mon. P.M. - 8 P.M.	Garman and Forgue Audio-Visual Materials							
	Hungate - Your Food							
Mon. P.M. - 9 P.M.	Peery - The High Cost of Dying							
	Bass - Landlord-Tenant Relationships							

4. Did you have the questions answered or discussed that you came to this conference for? YES____ NO____ HARD TO SAY____
   COMMENTS: _____
   _____

5. As a result of your initiative and from information you learned at this conference, what do you plan to do as a follow up activity? (For example, putting pliofilm over my windows, comparison shopping for food, using nutritional labelling, having a will written, etc.)?
   _____
   _____

PLEASE WRITE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS THAT YOU BELIEVE WOULD BE HELPFUL TO THE PERSONS WHO PLANNED THIS CONFERENCE. (USE THE BACK OF THE PAGE IF NECESSARY.)

THE POST-CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES

A. Thank-yous

Thank you notes should be prepared by each task force and sent to everyone who made any contribution to their efforts. Be especially sure to remember speakers, leaders, and groups/individuals who made some donation of equipment, supplies, etc. The project coordinator should see that each member of the steering committee and task forces receives recognition and a thank-you.

A thank you note might be the sole tangible reward that some of your hardest workers will receive, so do not underestimate its importance.

B. Finances

Right after the conference, the task force chairmen should send the financial coordinator any outstanding bills for payment. After balancing the books, the financial coordinator should maintain a record of the budget along with any financial recommendations for any similar workshop planning in the future.

C. Publicity

The publicity task force should summarize the workshop highlights and take these releases to the media who were not represented at the workshop. This should be made available for release immediately following the workshop, if at all possible. Otherwise, the news will quickly become history.

If any follow-up activities were planned or recommended, a separate article about these could be written.

D. Invitation/Registration

This task force should compile a final (and accurate) list of the participants including names, addresses, phone numbers, and affiliations. Ideally, you should mail a complete list to each of the participants. This mailing list should also be maintained for any follow-up purposes or any future invitations.

E. What does this mean for the future?

No later than two weeks after the workshop, while the activities are still fresh in peoples' minds, the original steering committee should reconvene for a brainstorming session. At this meeting, everyone should have a chance to freely state his feelings about the workshop. Keeping in mind the resources you had to work with, some topics for discussion should include advantages and disadvantages of the way in which the workshop was conducted, ways that the workshop could have been improved, assessments of the observed reactions of the participants to the workshop, if the target audience was actually reached, and a review of the evaluation forms. Thereby, this meeting provides an opportunity for the steering committee to make a realistic self-evaluation of the project. (By "realistic" we mean <u>not</u> comparing the project to the way it "could have been" had you had $50,000 to spend, for example.)

Out of this brainstorming session should come ideas for follow-up activities--<u>if</u> your group feels that it has a further contribution to make to consumer education. (No two projects will have exactly the same outcome; and, in some cases, it may be best to decide for closure once the workshop is completed.) Furthermore, any decision concerning

follow-up activities should depend heavily on the needs stated by the workshop participants. Therefore, after your steering committee has reviewed the project and considered any additional needs of its target audience, it should identify any follow-up activities that it would be able to deal with. These could include such things as conducting neighborhood sessions explaining how to repair a porch, publishing a newsletter on consumer concerns for the target audience, holding additional workshops to confront problems voiced by the participants, or setting up a local consumer-related agency or referral service.

These are just a few ideas from the spectrum of possible activities that you can pursue. Considering your own community's needs and resources, the alternatives are unlimited.

IN CONCLUSION

The authors realize that there are numerous contingencies not discussed in this manual. We trust that you and your co-workers on this project are flexible enough to deal with these situations as they arise.

Won't you let us know how our suggestions worked for you? Please let us hear some feedback from you by writing or calling:

Dr. Glen Mitchell, Project Director
Consumer Education Awareness Project
102 Wallace Annex
V.P.I. & S.U.
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
(703) 951-5815

Appendix A

VPI & SU Consumer Education Awareness Survey

Date _____
County or Government Unit
_____

Please mark the number of your answer on the accompanying sheet in pencil.

1. Your sex:

   1. Female 2. Male

2. Age:

   1. 16-30 years of age
   2. 31-45
   3. 46-60
   4. 61-75
   5. Over 75

3. In what type of community did you spend the largest portion of your life up to the time you were 16 years of age?

   1. Large city (250,000 or more)
   2. Small city (50,000 to 250,000)
   3. Population center of 10,000 to 50,000
   4. Population Center of 1,000 to 10,000
   5. Suburb
   6. Rural

4. In what type of community do you now live?

   1. Large city (250,000 or more)
   2. Small city (50,000 to 250,000)
   3. Population center of 10,000 to 50,000
   4. Population center of 1,000 to 10,000
   5. Suburb
   6. Rural

5. In the last twelve months, have you been dissatisfied enough with a consumer problem to act in any of the following ways? Rate them as:
   1. Yes 2. No 3. Don't know

   A. Written to or contacted manufacturers of some products or service.
   B. Talked to a store manager or employee about some product or service.
   C. Refused to pay for goods.
   D. Contacted the Better Business Bureau or the Chamber of Commerce.
   E. Joined a consumer group.
   F. Sought out legal aid concerning a consumer complaint.
   G. Contacted your local extension office for more information.

6. How often do you read newspaper and magazine articles on Consumers' Problems? Would you say you do this?

   1. Often, twice a week or more.
   2. Once in a while.
   3. Only if I happen to run across something
   4. Never, as I need help in reading.
   5. Zero times in the last year.
   6. Don't know.

7. It is illegal in Virginia to turn back the odometer (mileage meter) to show fewer miles driven on a used car for sale.

1. I think this is true.
2. I don't know.
3. I think this is not true.

8. A person signs a written contract to buy an encyclopedia from a door to door salesman. Under Virginia law, this contract cannot be canceled.

1. I think this is true.
2. I don't know.
3. I think this is not true.

9. A department store charges a monthly service charge of 1 1/2% a month on the amount people borrow on credit. This equals a cost of 18% a year.

1. I think this is true.
2. I don't know.
3. I think this is not true.

10. If you have been denied credit, you have the legal right to be told the name and address of the consumer reporting agency responsible for preparing the report that was used to deny the credit.

1. I think this is true.
2. I don't know.
3. I think this is not true.

11. Banks, retail stores and other lending institutions are legally required to state the true interest rate (APR) and other costs of credit transactions.

1. I think this is true.
2. I don't know.
3. I think this is not true.

12. In the last two years, have you ever contacted any state, county or city agency with a problem or question about something you bought or service you received and were not satisfied with the product or service?

1. No.
2. Yes, but only once.
3. Yes; two to four times.
4. Yes - 5 or more times.

13. If Yes (answer 2 to 4), were your experiences:

1. Highly satisfactory.
2. Satisfactory.
3. Neutral.
4. Unsatisfactory.
5. Highly unsatisfactory.

14. The next questions deal with consumer concerns and their ranking. They are a bit tedious but are very important. Of the following issues that face the <u>nation</u>, would you rate these issues as to what <u>you personally</u> are concerned about in the categories of:

1. A great deal.
2. Somewhat.
3. A little bit.
4. Not at all.

A. Keeping inflation under control.
B. Finding a job for the unemployed and underemployed.
C. Establishing a specific national energy policy.
D. Keeping spending by the federal government under control.
E. Controlling air and water pollution.
F. Lowering medical costs.
G. Providing adequate housing for the nation.
H. Reducing taxes.
I. Increasing productivity.
J. Helping consumers to get a fair deal when shopping.
K. Welfare reform.
L. Curbing big business abuses.
M. Aid to education.
N. National health insurance.
O. Curbing concentration of big business.
P. Crime prevention.
Q. Controlling water and air pollution.
R. Handling the problems of the cities.
S. Curbing labor abuses.
T. Improving communication between sectors of the economy.
U. Achieving more competition.
V. Fighting for consumer interests.
W. Others - list.

15. Of the above, what subjects would you give the highest priority to: _____
Of the above, what subjects would you give the second highest priority to: _____
Of the above, what subjects would you give the third highest priority to: _____

16. Below are some concerns that some consumers have expressed. How would you rate these to your personal concerns:

1. A great deal.
2. Somewhat.
3. A little bit.
4. Not at all.

A. The high prices of many products.
B. The high cost of medical and hospital care.
C. The poor quality of many products.
D. The failure of many companies to live up to claims made in their advertising.
E. The poor quality of after-sales service and repairs.
F. The feeling that many manufacturers don't care about you.
G. Too many products breaking or going wrong soon after you bring them home.
H. Misleading packaging or labeling.
I. Not being able to afford adequate health insurance.
J. The feeling that it is a waste of time to complain about consumer problems because nothing substantial will be achieved.
K. Not being able to get adequate insurance coverage against an accident or loss.

L. Obtaining credit.
M. Funeral Expenses.
N. Energy costs.
O. Car repairs.
P. High cost of food.
Q. Inadequate guarantees or warranties.
R. Failure of companies to handle complaints properly.
S. Too many products which are dangerous.
T. The absence of reliable information about different products and services.
U. Difficulty in getting insurance claims settled fairly.
V. Not knowing what to do if something is wrong with a product you have bought.
W. Difficulty in getting insurance claims paid promptly.
X. The difficulty of choosing between so many products.

17. Of the above, what do you feel is your family's biggest concern? (List)
Of the above, what do you feel is your family's second biggest concern?
_____
Of the above, what do you feel is your family's third biggest concern?
_____
List any others that you feel should be included. _____

18. If you were organizing for your community a consumer education workshop which was designed to help consumers with problems in their own lives, how would you rate these items:

1. Highly important.
2. Important.
3. Neutral.
4. Little importance.

A. Choosing medical assistance.
B. Buying medical insurance.
C. Shopping for food.
D. Buying life insurance.
E. Buying auto insurance.
F. How to cut back energy costs.
G. Buying an auto.
H. Buying and renting a house.
I. How to complain.
J. What to do when somebody dies.
K. Tenant-landlord relationships.
L. Estate planning.
M. How Better Business Bureau works.
N. The American Economy - What makes it go.
O. Repairing your own house.
P. Budgeting (Family Finance).
Q. Choosing the right university or vocational training after high school.
R. Auto repairs.
S. Refurbishing your house.
T. Women's rights.
U. Clothing expenses and how to reduce them.
V. How to communicate with government officials.
W. Taking care of the aged.
X. Crime prevention.
Y. Others - list.

19. What are the most important five subjects that you would have on this community consumer education awareness workshop (from above)? List by alphabet.

1. _____ 4. _____
2. _____ 5. _____
3. _____

20. One study indicates that providing information on a food products price per ounce and for nutritional content would cost shoppers about 2¢ for each $10 worth of groceries. Do you think it is worth it?

1. No 2. Yes 3. Don't know

21. In order to make this survey as meaningful as possible, we would appreciate it if you would answer a few questions about yourself.

What is your marital status?

1. Single.
2. Married.
3. Living together.
4. Separated.
5. Divorced.
6. Widowed.

22. How many are in the household?

1. One
2. Two
3. Three
4. Four
5. Five
6. Six
7. Seven
8. Eight
9. Nine to twelve
10. 13 and over

23. How many children are in the household under 19 years of age?

1. One
2. Two
3. Three
4. Four
5. Five
6. Six
7. Seven
8. Eight
9. Nine to twelve
10. 13 and over

24. Are you?

1. Black
2. White
3. Oriental
4. Spanish surname
5. American Indian
6. None of the above

25. This next question is optional. What is the household annual income before taxes. (Include interest, dividends and all government payments whether taxable or not.)

1. $4200 or less ($100 a week)
2. $4201 - $10,400 ($101 - $200 a week)
3. $10,401 - $15,600 ($201 - $300 a week)
4. $15,601 - $20,800 ($301 - $400 a week)
5. $20,801 - $31,201 ($401 - $500 a week)
6. Over $31,201 a year.
7. Do not care to answer.

26. What level of education have you completed?

1. Grade school or less.
2. Some high school.
3. High school diploma or high school equivalency diploma.
4. Some college.
5. 4 year college degree.
6. Some graduate or professional school.
7. Graduate or professional degree.

We thank you for your time and your answers. Please check to make sure you have answered all parts of the survey. If you have any additions or questions, please communicate these also. Thanks again.

REPLY FORM

1. 1 2
2. 1 2 3 4 5
3. 1 2 3 4 5 6
4. 1 2 3 4 5 6
5. A. 1 2 3
   B. 1 2 3
   C. 1 2 3
   D. 1 2 3
   E. 1 2 3
   F. 1 2 3
   G. 1 2 3
6. 1 2 3 4 5 6
7. 1 2 3
8. 1 2 3
9. 1 2 3
10. 1 2 3
11. 1 2 3
12. 1 2 3 4
13. 1 2 3 4 5
14. A. 1 2 3 4
    B. 1 2 3 4
    C. 1 2 3 4
    D. 1 2 3 4
    E. 1 2 3 4
    F. 1 2 3 4
    G. 1 2 3 4
    H. 1 2 3 4
    I. 1 2 3 4
    J. 1 2 3 4
    K. 1 2 3 4
    L. 1 2 3 4
    M. 1 2 3 4
    N. 1 2 3 4
    O. 1 2 3 4
    P. 1 2 3 4
    Q. 1 2 3 4
    R. 1 2 3 4
    S. 1 2 3 4
    T. 1 2 3 4
    U. 1 2 3 4
    V. 1 2 3 4
    W. _____
15. 1. _____
    2. _____
    3. _____

16. A. 1 2 3 4
    B. 1 2 3 4
    C. 1 2 3 4
    D. 1 2 3 4
    E. 1 2 3 4
    F. 1 2 3 4
    G. 1 2 3 4
    H. 1 2 3 4
    I. 1 2 3 4
    J. 1 2 3 4
    K. 1 2 3 4
    L. 1 2 3 4
    M. 1 2 3 4
    N. 1 2 3 4
    O. 1 2 3 4
    P. 1 2 3 4
    Q. 1 2 3 4
    R. 1 2 3 4
    S. 1 2 3 4
    T. 1 2 3 4
    U. 1 2 3 4
    V. 1 2 3 4
    W. 1 2 3 4
17. 1. _____
    2. _____
    3. _____
18. A. 1 2 3 4
    B. 1 2 3 4
    C. 1 2 3 4
    D. 1 2 3 4
    E. 1 2 3 4
    F. 1 2 3 4
    G. 1 2 3 4
    H. 1 2 3 4
    I. 1 2 3 4
    J. 1 2 3 4
    K. 1 2 3 4
    L. 1 2 3 4
    M. 1 2 3 4
    N. 1 2 3 4
    O. 1 2 3 4
    P. 1 2 3 4
    Q. 1 2 3 4
    R. 1 2 3 4
    S. 1 2 3 4
    T. 1 2 3 4
    U. 1 2 3 4
    V. 1 2 3 4
    W. 1 2 3 4
    X. 1 2 3 4
    Y. _____

REPLY FORM

19. 1. _____
    2. _____
    3. _____
    4. _____

20. 1 2 3

21. 1 2 3 4 5 6

22. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

23. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

24. 1 2 3 4 5 6

25. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

26. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Appendix B - Probability Sample

Probability Sampling is a selection of a subset from a population that is representative of the entire population. Basically, you try to achieve true randomness so that everyone has the same chance of being selected. (In many cases, you will probably be more concerned with a judgment sample where those persons or households are chosen whom you want to come to the workshop. It is practically impossible to use this sample as a base to expand to the entire population, however.)

There are three keys to a probability sample that will dictate the size of sample. Those three characteristics are:

a) The permissable error allowable(e)

b) The desire confidence level in the results. Generally, this is based on terms of how many chances in 100 tries a similar result could be due to chance.

Confidence is often desired at the 95% level (i.e. that 19 out of 20 times this result was <u>not</u> due to chance) and is expressed as two standard errors (t).

The formula for sample size is: $N = \frac{(t^2)\ (s^2)}{e^2}$

Where N=sample size s=error limit

t=confidence limit expressed in standard errors, i.e. 99% confidence equals three standard errors; 9% confidence equals two standard errors

s-standard deviation

Appendix C

Responsibilities of Community Workshop Initiators

Coordinator Pro Tem (Initiator)

1. Recruits responsible steering committee members.
2. Shares information and suggestions from this manual in order to generate ideas from the steering committee.
3. Facilitates the work of the steering committee by playing an active (but not stifling) role.
4. Works on project budget with the steering committee.
5. Assumes role of steering committee member should he not be chosen permanent coordinator.

Steering Committee Members

1. Determine issue(s) and target group(s) to be addressed by the project.
2. Determine goal and objectives of the project.
3. Elect permanent coordinator from among the steering committee membership.
4. Determine exact workshop format and session topics.
5. Approve budget for the project.
6. Promote systematic planning of the project.
7. Lead (or chair) a task force.
8. Appoint members to the task force which he chairs.
9. Serve as liaison among the permanent coordinator, other task forces, and members of his own task force.
10. Help perform the responsibilities of his task force.
11. Send thank you notes to his task force members.
12. Reconvene after the workshop for a brainstorming/self evaluation/ additional planning session.

Permanent Coordinator

1. Meets regularly with the task force leaders.
2. Acts as liaison among the task forces.
3. Is available to help solve any problems encountered by the task forces.
4. Oversees the progress of planning and implementing the project.
5. Plays an active and facilitating role in evaluation of the project.
6. Sends thank you letters to steering committee members.
7. Reconvenes the steering committee after the workshop to facilitate the brainstorming session for any follow-up activities.

Financial Coordinator

1. Acts as treasurer/bookkeeper for the project.
2. Keeps accurate records of all bills and expenses.
3. Handles any registration fees.
4. Closes out books.
5. Maintains records for any future budget considerations.

Recorder

1. Meets regularly with coordinator and task force leaders to record the meeting proceedings.

2. Distributes pertinent information from these meetings to all task force members.

3. Sends reminders of the meetings to members.

Speaker Task Force Members

1. Identify speakers/session leaders.

2. Evaluate each prospective speaker according to his knowledge about the subject, his ability to effectively communicate this knowledge to the audience, and his ability to "fit into" the workshop design.

3. Issue invitations to speakers.

4. Send the speaker(s) a letter of confirmation verifying all arrangements, once he has committed himself.

5. Share the speaker(s) name, correct title, and affiliation with other committees (especially the publicity task force and the invitations/registration task force). Request a vita and picture for the publicity task force.

6. Inform the space/equipment/meals task force of any special equipment needs the speaker may have.

7. Duplicate any handouts that you agreed to prepare for the speaker(s).

8. Send a brief letter to the speaker(s) about a week before the workshop to remind him and to verify arrangements.

9. Obtain information about the speaker for an introduction, and give this to the person doing the introduction.

10. Greet and escort the speaker(s).

11. Send a thank you letter.

Invitations/Registration Task Force Members

1. Build mailing lists of invitees.
2. Compile invitation and pre-registration form.
3. Issue invitations and distribute pre-registration materials.
4. Maintain an alphabetical registration list from the pre-registration forms that are returned.
5. Make name tags for those who pre-registered.
6. Keep space/equipment/meals task force informed about the number of meal reservations (if meals are to be served).
7. If fees will be waived, establish criteria for granting waivers, compile a "scholarship application", determine recipients, and inform applicants of the waiver decision.
8. Prepare agenda for distribution at the workshop.
9. Locate registration desk near entrance of workshop location.
10. Post signs indicating location of meeting rooms.
11. Provide blank materials (such as name tags) at registration desk for walk-ins.
12. Prepare final list of participants (name, address, phone, affiliation) and distribute to all participants.
13. Send thank you letters to all helpers.

Space/Equipment/Meals Task Force Members

1. Establish criteria for the workshop facility, and locate an appropriate facility based on these criteria.

2. Confirm the facility reservation in writing.

3. Inform other task forces of the location.

4. Find out and arrange for any special equipment needs of the speaker(s).

5. Decide on the best alternative for meal provisions (if any), and have any arrangements confirmed in writing.

6. Verify all facility, equipment, and meal arrangements about one week before the workshop.

7. At the workshop, arrange rooms according to specifications of the speaker(s), set up and check equipment, and prepare for coffee break (if any).

8. After the workshop, make sure that the facilities are cleaned up and return any borrowed equipment.

9. Send thank you letters to all donors and helpers.

Publicity Task Force

1. Recruit responsible publicity task force members.

2. Get to know those most responsible (editors and producers) for media outputs and inform them of your cause. Be conscious of their clues on what makes the news and doesn't.

3. Form a press release list for all persons involved with publicity (t.v. stations, radio stations, newspapers, plant papers, etc.).

4. Recruit someone to photograph events if newspaper photographer isn't always available.

5. Enlist cosponsers (local organizations) for your workshop.

6. Make sure those on your press release receive notices in plenty of time before event.

7. Send media representatives who do not cover the conference a summary of the highlights; this should be distributed immediately following the workshop.

Evaluation Task Force

1. Choose responsible and informed people to form an evaluation task force.

2. Prepare an evaluation form (based on the workshop's objectives) prior to the workshop.

3. Review and discuss feasibility of the suggested format revisions with the steering committee.

4. Distribute evaluations and collect them; provide pencils if needed and a place to leave completed evaluations.

5. Meet with workshop leaders immediately after the program to get their reactions.

6. Analyze and summarize the completed forms to present to the steering committee.

7. Send summaries of evaluations to all workshop leaders to help them in future program planning.

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Pamphlets:

"Fraud and the Consumer"

"Contracts and the Consumer"

"Credit and the Consumer"

"Warranties and the Consumer"

"How to Buy a Used Car"

Educational Modules:

"Obtaining and Using Consumer Credit"

"Avoiding Consumer Frauds and Misrepresentations"

"Making and Using a Financial Plan"

Manual:

"A Financial Counseling Manual"

Proceedings:

"January Conference Summary"

Materials printed have been exhausted. Persons desiring copies can obtain them at cost by writing Mr. Robert Gibson, President; National Foundation for Consumer Credit; Federal Bar Building, West; 1819 H Street, NW; Washington, D.C. 20006.